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4 February 1975

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MEMORANDUM FOR: [REDACTED]

SUBJECT : RONI Report

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

1. During December 1974 and January 1975, I reviewed 110 current intelligence items relative to my areas of interest. Of these, 33 appeared in the NID, 35 in the NIB, and 42 surfaced as DINs.

2. There were 56 items relating to Soviet missiles with the majority (32) merely reporting ICBM tests or activity indicating upcoming tests. I seriously question the value or utility of such data at the national level, at least on a daily basis. Early on in the Soviet ICBM development program such data may have been of interest, but after 17+ years it would seem that routine testing could be "wrapped-up" on a weekly or, better yet, a monthly basis. If this were done, a more complete analysis of the tests could be presented and any significant aspects of the tests could be highlighted.

3. A very fine article regarding probable Soviet

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development of a mobile ICBM appeared in the NID. Unfortunately, it contained very little that was not covered in NIE 11-3/8-74 and the Interagency Memorandum that was done on the subject last year. I suspect, however, that the NID item was more widely read than the other two publications and, if so, the item served a useful purpose.

4. The NID, NIB, and DINs all carried items on the new Soviet IRBM, the SS-X-20, which probably carries MIRVs. This development is significant because of its possible impact on the SAL and MBFR negotiations. There is the possibility that the Forward Based Systems issue was not a problem during the Vladivostok meeting, in part, because of this upcoming system, which could be used by the US as a debating point. This development (the SS-X-20) should be of interest at the national level.

5. On 3 January, the NIO ran an item on the collision just off Holy Loch of a US Polaris submarine and a Soviet attack submarine. Unfortunately, Jack Anderson had run the same news in the Washington Post a day or two earlier. This preemption on Anderson's part forced the surfacing (no pun intended) of a piece of information in a current intelligence document 2 months after the event occurred. This deserves a Warner Wolfe "Boo."

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6. The NID and DIN both carried items on the sharply increased Soviet air reconnaissance along the Sino Soviet border during late January. This activity should be of interest to the Sino/Soviet watchers at the national level.

7. The NIB carried an item on how a senior strategic analyst at Moscow's USA Institute viewed the Vladivostok agreement. This bit warranted national level attention.

8. Many of the other items reviewed were of little use to the national level consumers but had some value for military command and operational echelons. A considerable number would be of use to the intelligence analytical level where the information was probably already available to begin with.

9. Overall, some 13 items were judged to be useful at the national level, 26 were considered of interest at the national level, 12 were of interest or utility to military commands and operational entities, 31 were useful only to analysts, 12 space items were of primary interest to NASA, and the remainder were simply filler items.

NON-CURRENT PUBLICATIONS

10. There were 2 DIA publications reviewed during the period, a DIE titled "PRC Strategic Nuclear Forces: How

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Much Is Enough?" and a DIA Intelligence Appraisal concerning Soviet space reconnaissance activity, 7 to 29 November 1974.

11. The DIE appeared to be an attempt to rationalize the DIPP projection of PRC nuclear forces in the 1980s. The estimate is shot full of assumptions, all of which can be argued (and should have been) and implies a greater fund of evidence on Chinese thought and decision-making processes than is actually available. One gets the impression that the postulated numbers were first drawn up, then an attempt was made to get inside Chinese heads (as constructed by DIA) to find reasons for the numbers. An unpersuasive document. The ACS/I, Air Force, has taken two footnotes to the DIE which make much better sense than the text.

12. The Intelligence Appraisal, on the other hand, is a well done piece. It discusses the increased Soviet space recce activity on the Middle East when tensions were increasing and evaluates the activity as part of the Soviet crisis management machinery and procedures. It is a well written article that should be of interest at the national level, albeit of little direct utility.

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